IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please insert at page 1, line 2, with the following paragraph:

--Cross Reference To Related Applications

The present application is a continuation of Application Serial No. 09/331,569, filed August 27, 1999.--

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 10, as follows:

~~**Figure 3** is a~~**Figures 3A-3C** are photographic ~~representation~~representations of a Northern analysis of poly(A)+ mRNA extracted from kidneys of heterozygous (+/-), homozygous (-/-) and wild type (+/+) mice. The blot was initially examined with a probe encoding the deleted region of the IL-11Rα locus (Panel A), then with a probe situated in the locus 5' of the deleted region (Panel B), and finally with a rat glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase probe (GAPDH) to compare mRNA loading (Panel C). Also indicated is the size of the expected mRNA transcript (1.8 kb) in the heterozygous and wild type organs.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 8, as follows:

~~**Figure 4** is a~~**Figures 4A-4H** are photographic ~~representation~~representations showing pregnant uteri of normal (left panels) and *IL11Rα*-/- mice (right panels) at 4.5-7.5 d.p.c. showing the reduced size of the decidual swellings in *IL11Rα*-/- mice. *a,b,* 4.5 d.p.c. cd, 5.5 d.p.c. *e,f,* 6.5 d.p.c. *g,h,* 7.5 d.p.c. Mice were injected with Chicago Sky Blue dye 5 minutes prior to collecting the 4.5 and 5.5 d.p.c. specimens in order to visualise the implantation sites. The blue dye reaction is reduced in the *IL11Rα*-/- specimens.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 24, as follows:

~~Figure 5 is a~~**Figures 5A-5L** are photographic ~~representation~~representations showing decidual transformation of uteri of normal and *IL11Rα-/-* mice and 9.5 d.p.c. placental tissues. *a,b,* Sections of WT (a) and *IL11Rα-/-* (b) 4.5 d.p.c. uteri showing the reduced secondary decidual response to the implanting blastocyst in the *IL11Rα-/-* uterus. *c,d,* 5.5 d.p.c. WT *(c)* and *IL11Rα-/- (d)* uteri. *e,f,* Low power view of WT *(e)* and *IL11Rα-/- (f)* uteri at 6.5 d.p.c. The *IL11Rα-/-* uterus shows reduced decidual size, with hemorrhage in the uterine lumen. *g, IL11Rα-/-* uterus at 7.5 d.p.c., showing destruction of the abnormal decidua. *h,* High power view of a *IL11Rα-/-* decidua at 7.5 d.p.c., demonstrating disruption of the antimesometrial decidua and the absence of mesometrial decidualization. An intact 7.5 d.p.c. embryo is present. *i, IL11Rα-/-* d.p.c. deciduum, demonstrating the overgrowth of giant trophoblast cells in the mesometrial port of the deciduum. *j,* RNA *in situ* hybridisation was performed on a section of a 7.5 d.p.c. *IL11Rα-/-* decidua, using a probe for the giant-cell marker placental lactogen-l. Bright-field images of adjacent sections probed with left, sense, and right antisense probes. Counterstained with Mayers haematoxylin. *k, I,* 9.5 d.p.c. WT *(k)* and *IL11Rα-/- (I)* placentas showing the absence of maternal decidual cells and the increased numbers of giant cells in the *IL11Rα-/-* uterus. 1: labrynthine trophoblast, s: spongiotrophoblast, g: giant cells, ma: maternal decidua. *a-i, k, l,* Haematoxylin and eosin stain. Scale bars: a, *b,* 20μm, *c,d,* 40μm, *e-g,* 200μm, *hj,* 50 μm.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 20, as follows:

~~Figure 7 is a~~**Figures 7A-7B** are photographic ~~representation~~representations of gene expression in virgin and 0.5-9.5 d.p.c. uteri of C57BL/6 females and in oil-induced deciduomata. (A) RNase protection analysis of gene expression in the uterus during the estrus cycle and from 0.5-9.5 d.p.c 7.5-9.5 d.p.c. samples were divided into decidua + embryo (D) and uterus (U).

Numbers refer to days post coitum. C: control, P: proestrus, OE: estrus, M: metestrus, Probe: full length probe, t-RNA: probe after RNase digestion. The lower band in the LIF panel is a partially degraded transcript. In the LIFRα panel the asterisk indicates the protected band corresponding to the full length transcript and the arrowhead indicates the protected band corresponding to the soluble form of the LIFRα. Control samples: IL-11: testis, LIF: STO cells, IL11Rα: kidney, gpl3O: liver, LIFRα: liver, Actin: testis. *b,* RNase protection analysis of IL-11 gene expression in RNA prepared from deciduomata induced by injection of oil into pseudopregnant uteri of C57BL/6 mice. Numbers refer to days post coitum. Asterisk: undigested full length probe. Arrowhead: protected fragment.